

CCoA
California Commission on Aging

AGEWATCH

Advocacy Alert!

Act now to protect vital aging program dollars! urges n4a

The next two weeks are a critical time for local advocates to reach out to their Congressional Representatives in support of vital aging programs before Congress returns to Washington, D.C. in September.

According to the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), before leaving for summer break, House appropriators proposed “deep cuts to a few key programs that support older adults. The Labor-HHS funding bill that passed the House Appropriations committee would eliminate funding for the State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) and cut funding for Elder Justice by 14 percent. Lawmakers also proposed moving the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) from the Department of Labor (DOL) to the Administration for Community Living (ACL), but in the transfer slashed SCSEP by \$100 million (25 percent) from current funding levels.”

n4a reports that core Older Americans Act (OAA) programs were proposed for level funding, despite the growing cost of providing services for an ever increasing number being served. With plans by House leadership to take up appropriations bills as soon as Congress returns, Senate appropriators will have also a pivotal role in the final outcome. Both the House and Senate will need to pass identical budget bills to complete the process, and at least eight minority votes are needed for passage in the Senate.

What can you do?

n4a says: “Reach Out to Your Representative(s) in the House, and ask him or her to support any effort to increase SHIP, SCSEP and Elder Justice funding in a final House bill. n4a is working with several House champions on a possible amendment to the FY 2018 Labor-HHS bill on the House floor next month to “fix” these deep cuts to aging programs, but in the meantime, ask your Representative(s) for their support of increased funding for these programs.”

“Reach out and encourage your Senator to fully fund all OAA and other critical aging programs that support older adults, or to reach out to colleagues on the Appropriations Committee in support of these programs. Also, please tell him or her to ensure that the House cuts to SHIP, Elder Justice and SCSEP programs ARE NOT included in the Senate Labor-HHS bill. Make sure your Senators and their staff understand how SHIP, Elder Justice and SCSEP programs benefit older adults—their constituents—in their state. It is important to personalize this outreach. You can use [n4a’s recent letter](#) to Senate Appropriators as a template to craft your own outreach.”

“Timing is critical, as we expect House and Senate Appropriators to consider their funding bills as soon as they return to DC! Members of Congress are home for two more weeks, so please keep reaching out to your contacts in your local and Washington, DC offices. You can find contact information for your Representatives at www.house.gov and Senators at www.senate.gov, and use [n4a’s FY 2018 Appropriations Campaign page](#) to inform your advocacy!”

Information excerpted from n4a Advocacy Alert: Keep Up Appropriations Advocacy During Recess! Lawmakers at Home for Two More Weeks, Aug. 23, 2017.

AGEWATCH is an occasional publication of the California Commission on Aging (CCoA) intended to inform, educate, and advocate. The CCoA is an independent state agency established in 1973 to serve as the principal state advocate on behalf of older Californians. The CCoA office is located at 1300 National Drive, Suite 173, Sacramento, CA 95834. (916) 419-7591

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